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Technical Papers

Environmental Indicators

- N.Wentworth, D.Shaw, Quality Considerations in Developing EPA's EI -
10:30 AM

TECHNICAL SESSION: Environmental Indicators

Quality Considerations in Developing EPA's Environmental Indicators

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In 1991, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched its Environmental Indicators Initiative. In 2003, EPA published its Draft Report on the Environment 2003 which described what EPA knew, and did not know, about the state of the environment. Since 2003, the Agency has been working to refine and make more scientifically rigorous a suite of indicators that describe are presented in chapters on air, water, land, human health and ecological condition.

For EPA's Report on the Environment, an indicator is a numerical value derived from actual measurements of a pressure, state or ambient condition, exposure, or human health or ecological condition over a specified geographic domain, whose trends over time represent or draw attention to underlying trends in the condition of the environment. Many of the indicators are supported by data that were collected by other Agencies and organizations. There are many challenges to presenting data that have been collected over time, in different locations, using different testing methods, etc. This technical session will explore these challenges, using real examples of data sets that are being used in the report and citing reasons why other data sets are not being presented in the report. There will also be discussion on the peer review approaches being taken on the report and its components.